BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Richard Cherldoo Chung

"My dad believe in, you got to advertise, eh? So even when I was going to high school, my brother and I, I think we were pretty well-dressed guys. Because as far as making clothes for us, he used to make because he felt that we were advertising the clothes. The wares. But then, (chuckles) one thing, my dad was pretty frugal, try to save. . . . I remember when I was going to grammar, school, all this khaki material. With the leftover he'd make pants, trousers for us. But those days, the dyes were not as good as today, not too permanent, not too reliable. So, I remember once he made trousers for me, and I wore the thing. In the beginning, it looked just like one material, same material. But after once wash, oh, the thing came one side dark, one side light."

Richard Cherldoo Chung, fifth of nine children, was born April 17, 1914 in Kōloa. His parents, Ho Young Chung and Durk Haing Park Chung emigrated from Korea to Ele'ele, Kaua'i in 1904. Ho Young Chung was a plantation laborer, stevedore and rice farmer before moving the family to Kōloa in 1912. There he started a coffee shop in Kōloa town.

In 1914, he started a tailor shop which eventually grew to be the largest on Kaua'i. Starting at age six, Richard helped his father in the business, first by starting the fire for the charcoal irons, then traveling with him to different plantations to sell tailored suits and trousers. Richard eventually learned to sew.

Richard attended Kōloa School and Kaua'i High School, graduating in 1932. He then worked full-time with his father. In 1937, after the depression caused the business to decline and eventually close, he decided to take a job with Mutual Telephone Company in Kōloa. In 1946, he moved to Honolulu with his wife and family and worked first at Fort Shafter, then with Hawaiian Telephone Company.

He lives in Honolulu with his wife. They have three children and six grandchildren.

Tape No. 15-58-1-87

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Richard Cherldoo Chung (RC)

November 10, 1987

Mānoa, O'ahu

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Richard Chung on November 10, 1987 at his home in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay, why don't we begin. Mr. Chung, why don't you start by telling me when and where you were born.

RC: Oh, yeah. I was born in Kōloa, April 17, 1914.

WN: Where are your parents from?

RC: Oh, Korea. Kyangsando, Taegu, Pusan. That's southern part of Korea.

WN: And when did they come to Hawai'i?

RC: They came in 1904 as plantation laborers, contract labor. They first worked in 'Ele'ele. I'm not sure whether that was at McBryde Plantation at that time or not. But, you know, they said, "'Ele'ele," and those days, laborers work for dollar a day. Men. And the women, if they wanted to work, they get fifty cents a day.

So, my mom didn't work. She opened something like a kitchen, you know, for (other Korean workers), because those days, mostly bachelors. There were very few married people. And so in that camp over there, (there) used to be lot of Korean bachelors, so she cooked for them. That way, (she) make a little extra money.

WN: Did she do anything else? Like laundry or anything like that?

RC: No, no, just cook.

WN: I'm wondering, the area of Korea that your parents are from, did a lot of immigrants come from that area to Hawai'i?

RC: Gee, I really don't know. Although I'm sure quite a few of them came from there, because my parents converted to Christianity just maybe little before they left there, I think. And, so, actually,

the people that came were those that converted to Christianity. [Labor recruitment in Korea took place in Christian churches with support from American missionaries.]

WN: Was it agricultural area?

RC: Yeah. My father [Ho Young Chung] had a farm. From what he told me, the farm was at the foothills of a mountain. And he owned the whole thing. And Koreans, they bury up in the mountain, the cemetery is up in the mountain. So, his parents or whoever, they were buried up in the mountain. And then the farm is at the foothill.

And actually, you know, they must raise grain, I think. Because, the way he said, they had cattle, a couple, but that's more for beasts of burden, you know. And he mentioned that wintertime you got to bring the cow into the house, because cold, eh? He mentioned that you got to cook the feed for the cow, and all. I think he had couple of cows, but that was more for plowing, and stuff like that, I think. I think he must have raised rice. You know, planted rice, things like that.

WN: So they came in 1904, and came to 'Ele'ele, Kaua'i first?

RC: Mm hmm [yes], mm hmm.

WN: And you said that your mother [Durk Haing Park Chung] worked as a cook for Korean bachelors.

RC: Yeah. Opened a kitchen or something, in the camp.

WN: What about your father? What did he do?

RC: Oh, he started working for the [McBryde] Plantation first. Regular, in the cane field, I guess. But then, after, must be maybe year or year and a half, I think, he heard that the stevedores got paid better. So he applied and he worked as a stevedore. Those days, if I remember correctly, all contract workers came on a three-year contract. And after that, you can go back home, or whatever. So, I think he must have worked three years, until his contract was up. Then I understand he bought a rice mill down Hanapepe.

WN: When he worked as a stevedore, where did he work?

RC: Port Allen.

WN: Oh, Port Allen?

RC: Yeah. And those days, you know, raw sugar all in bags. Hundred-twenty-five-pound bag. So they used to stack 'em up in the warehouse, and then, when time to ship, they load 'em on the ship.

He said, those days, I guess, all people, all the ethnic groups, they were kind of clannish. You know, the Koreans stick together, the Japanese stick together, Chinese, kind of, they by themselves.

And he mentioned that the stevedores, when he went in, were mostly Japanese. They short, stocky, but strong men. And I guess that was hard work. These old-timers, he said there were about five Koreans that went in. And these [Japanese] guys figure, give 'em bad time, eh? I mean, you know, make it tough. So, he says, lunchtime like that, instead of letting them rest, they go and do something, challenge. Maybe carry sugar or challenge each other and (wrestle at times).

WN: Who can carry the most?

RC: Yeah, yeah. And, you know, he said, oh, the first two weeks, was sore. He said, everybody ready to quit. I think he said, only he and another guy lasted the two weeks, the body so sore. But, he said, you know what they do? Like how much you can carry. You stand, they load the sugar [on you], you know. They put one bag on left shoulder, one on the right shoulder, then they put one over your head.

WN: Oh, yeah?

RC: And then, see how far you can walk with that load. That's about 375 pounds. And if you can carry more, then I guess they'll put another one on, if you can stay up on your feet. Things like that, you know. And they used to wrestle. He said, in the warehouse, when you stack sugar, you build just like steps, all the way up to the ceiling. And they load up, so you always climbing up. (Chuckles)

WN: That sounds like hard work.

RC: Oh, yeah. He said he was ready to quit, too. He said it was real tough.

WN: How long did he last? Two weeks, you said?

RC: No, no, no. He said, out of the five, I think only two of them lasted, I think, or something like that. The rest all quit. They couldn't take it. After that, was all right, he said. But the first two weeks was real (hard), you know. After that, he said, you kind of got used to (it), I guess the body don't ache as much. So, he worked (as a) stevedore, till his contract was up.

He said, those days, plantation, they were real rough on the men, you know. You mention once that somebody was sick and stayed home, boy, he said the luna come over on a horse with a whip, go in the house, drag him out, make him go to work. No such thing as you sick, those days, boy. Plantation, the managers, and the lunas, like that, they were just like kings. That's the reason, I'm sure, most of them [i.e., laborers], when they can get out, they get out.

WN: Your father went into farming?

RC: Yeah, after that he leased a rice mill. Started rice, you know. He

must have stayed there until about, I would say, 1912. Then he moved to Kōloa. Because, you know, I was born 1914 [in Kōloa], and my older sister was born 1912, and she was born in 'Ele'ele. So, must have been about, maybe, after 1912, after she was born.

WN: Your father worked in 'Ele'ele first, then Port Allen, and then his rice [mill] was in Hanapēpē?

RC: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: Oh, I see, I see. Do you know why they moved to Kōloa?

RC: Oh. His rice field, that land over there, that was only leasing, he said. He heard that they were going to take that away to expand the port facilities. So he got out. How he got out, I don't know. Whether he sold the place, or maybe he didn't plant another crop, or something, just gave up the lease, I guess.

Then he moved to Kōloa. He started a coffee shop, restaurant. I really don't know the location, but I think it was either the--I don't know--old post office area, or something like that.

WN: So, it was on Kōloa Road?

RC: Yeah. (Pause) I think there was a Chinese fellow that he got to do the cooking for him in the restaurant. Because, we got to know that man, and he was a good family friend. But the coffee shop didn't last too long. Because, he claimed too much work for a five cents cup of coffee. (Chuckles) So, then . . .

WN: You don't remember the coffee shop?

RC: No, I was just born. Or a little after that.

One thing, my dad, in Korea, he learned herbal medicine. You know, Orientals, the Chinese like that, they use. He bought this herbal medicine cabinets, and he used to make herbal medicine. In fact, most of my family never did go to the hospital. If we get sick, he made some kind of bitter potion. But that was sometime later.

WN: Did people come to his house to buy the medicine? Or anything like that?

RC: Yeah. Very few, because, I think, after all he wasn't a licensed doctor, or anything like that, and I guess you cannot dispense. But, somebody that's good friend, or something, and they want, he make. But, mostly was for family use.

And same thing with, those days, all births at home. Nobody went to the hospital. They had midwives those days, so, sometimes they come. But my family, I think my father helped my mother, that's all. That's what I think. I don't think we had any midwife.

WN: So all nine of you were born at home?

RC: Well, I don't know about the [older] ones when they were in 'Ele'ele or anything like that, but Kōloa, yeah, I think everybody was born at home.

I remember, I don't know which one of my younger brothers or sisters, but when I was little older, that the next morning I hear, oh, that the baby was born. And that was after he gave up the coffee shop and started the tailor business.

WN: I see. So when did he start the tailor shop?

RC: Gee, I'm not sure. Maybe 1914, somewhere about there, I think. Because from what he told me, I don't think he stayed very long with the coffee shop. Maybe couple of years at the most. I don't think more than that.

WN: So when he started, was the tailor shop at the same place where the coffee shop was?

RC: No. I think he moved a couple of houses down the street.

WN: So where exactly was the tailor shop?

RC: Oh. There's a road that goes in, into the Charman estate, and right next, alongside that road. On the other side of the road was this Ho Lun Store. If facing the main drag, Ho Lun Store would be on the right, and then there was another building. There were three stores in the building, and there was a Chang Sun Store, and there was the Isonaga Store, and the Sasaki Store.

WN: So you were in that area?

RC: Uh huh [yes].

WN: So you're not too far from Weliweli Road, then? That road . . .

RC: Which one is Weliweli? The courthouse road?

WN: Right, right.

RC: Courthouse road is Weliweli Road? [RC is referring to the road that the Kōloa Courthouse was on. Today it is the site of the Kōloa Civic Center.]

WN: Right.

RC: You know, I don't know when they named those roads, because when we were there, I don't think they called that Weliweli.

WN: Maybe not, yeah?

RC: We used to just call it "courthouse road." I don't know when they named those streets.

WN: So what did you folks call the main drag that they call Kōloa Road today?

RC: (Chuckles) I don't know. On the top of that drag, where that thing made a loop and came back down, the portion that went up to the plantation manager's [home], we used to call that "plantation road," or something like that.

WN: Oh, yeah?

RC: Yeah. Well, I really don't know.

WN: I notice that in talking to old-timers of Kōloa, they don't refer to the roads, the street names.

RC: Yeah. I think when we were kids, you know, we never did, I don't know of any road. You know, we just say "courthouse road," or "new mill road," or Po'ipū Road.

WN: So roughly then, your folks' tailor shop was between the courthouse road and the plantation store?

RC: Yeah, yeah. About halfway, yeah?

WN: On the main Kōloa Road?

RC: Mm hmm, mm hmm [yes].

WN: I see.

RC: And the ballpark over there, was in front, across the (street).

WN: Across the street?

RC: Yeah, across the street, main street.

WN: Which is today, the post office.

RC: Mm?

WN: Today, the post office is there. Where the ballpark was.

RC: Oh, is that right?

WN: Yeah.

RC: You mean, they don't have the post office down near Kaua'i Motors?

WN: No.

RC: Oh, oh, I didn't know that.

WN: The post office is now across the street from where your tailor shop used to be. Near, not far from the Japanese church and the Japanese [-language] school.

RC: Oh, oh, I see.

WN: Right there. You better go back and look.

(Laughter)

RC: Yeah. I haven't been back, oh, almost twenty years, I think.

WN: Yeah. So how did your father learn tailoring? Or, did he ever tell you why he wanted to start a tailor shop?

RC: No, he never did tell me why. Only reason I can guess is that maybe that was for sale at that time, you know, that tailor shop. And I think that was the only tailor shop in the town, at that time, so maybe he figured that was a good business to go in.

WN: So it was already a tailor shop?

RC: Yeah.

WN: Who owned it?

RC: I don't know. I never did ask him. But there was a man that was a tailor, you know. Whether that person owned the shop, I don't know. And my father bought the thing, and then he worked for my father. That, I don't know. But, when my father first started, there was a tailor there. I mean, he hired a man that knew how to sew, and things like that.

WN: I see.

RC: And, my father and my mother slowly learned how to sew from that man. He taught my parents how to sew.

WN: Did your mother know how to sew before?

RC: No, I don't think so. She was an only child, and I don't think she knew how to sew. I'm not sure on that. (Chuckles) Whether they knew how to use a sewing machine or not.

So this tailor worked with my dad for quite a few years, I think. But then, I guess, after a while, we actually wasn't even making a go, he said. Because, he said, after a while, the thing was going downhill. Wasn't making money. So he said he had to let that man go. You know, he just couldn't pay the guy. So, then, I guess he did it, he and my mother, the two of them just worked.

WN: Was this man Korean?

RC: Yeah, Korean. (Pause) He said when he had to let the man go, they were almost broke. But, slowly, the two of them, they came out and survived, I guess.

WN: And where was your house?

RC: The one alongside Charman [Lane]. The tailor shop was in the front and the house, I mean the living quarters, in the back.

WN: Oh, it's the same building?

RC: Yeah, same building.

WN: How many bedrooms?

RC: (Chuckles) I remember the back is two stories, so, the bottom floor, I think half was a kitchen, and the bath and whatever, and one half was one bedroom. Then upstairs, there were two bedrooms. In other words, upstairs was all just sleeping, living quarters.

Those days, from what I remember, I don't know how old I was, but those days there was no electricity, no gas, so everything like their iron, was charcoal iron. And, as soon as I could, I must have been maybe seven years old, my job was to get that charcoal iron hot, in the morning. So, you know, you buy bellows to . . .

WN: To fan it.

RC: Yeah. I remember he had a bellows, and, while I was doing it, he had to buy another bellows because I guess I used to put them too close to the charcoal so that I made the thing charred. The front. And I still have the bellows, the second one. So that bellows is, oh, over fifty years old, I think.

WN: So, tell me, what did you have to do to get the charcoal iron started? What was the first thing you had to do?

RC: Uh, gee, (pause) I'm not sure now how we started that thing. I remember we had two irons, one was kind of small, and one was a huge big one. I think over a foot in length, you know, big. So, I'm not sure whether I started the fire outside, and then put it in the iron, or started the thing in the iron. But I know I used to have to fan that thing with that bellows to get that thing red hot.

WN: What kind of wood did you use?

RC: You know, we used guava charcoal, because--according to my dad, anyway--<u>kiawe</u> charcoal sputters, see. And if a spark comes out while you ironing something, the thing make a hole in the clothes, and then that's ruined. So, according to him, guava charcoal doesn't sputter, so we always had to buy guava. And, you know,

guava was kind of scarce. People didn't make too much guava charcoal, they make more with kiawe. So was little more expensive, but then you had to buy guava. And then, after that, the gas iron came in. Coleman gas iron, Coleman gaslight. So then we switch over to gas.

WN: So in the days that you had charcoal iron, what kind of light did you folks have?

RC: Oh, I think must have been . . .

WN: Kerosene?

RC: Yeah. Must have been that kerosene lamp. Gee, funny, kind of hard to remember things, you know. Yeah, now I think about it, gee. I know we had kerosene lamp, the one you turn the wick up.

WN: So your job was to get the charcoal iron going?

RC: Mmm [yes].

WN: Did you have to iron, too?

RC: No, no, no. I was too small. Later, I learned sewing, but that was when I was much older, already, in my teens. In fact, I learned sewing, the real sewing, I think, after I got out of high school. Then I started working with him [father], you know, full time. But, prior to that was just more or less help.

WN: So with the charcoal iron, now, did you have to use the bellow a lot to keep it going?

RC: No, I think . . .

WN: Or once you got it going, you don't have to . . .

RC: Yeah. Once you got it red hot, then good.

WN: Yeah?

RC: Yeah. You know, in those days, say, to heat the water, or cooking, everybody use wood. In fact, kerosene stove came little later. Beginning was all wood. I know we used lot of wood in cooking, and so I remember my dad always buying wood and we always sawing and splitting wood and all that.

WN: Did you use the guava only for the iron?

RC: Yeah.

WN: Or did you use guava for everything else?

RC: No. Only iron.

WN: Only the iron?

RC: In fact, for the other wood, in those days, we had to buy the wood. People come out and sell. Sometimes they sell eucalyptus, or I think plum, and then you use that for firewood.

So after that, we used to have kerosene stove. I think I must have been about eleven years old, or twelve maybe, then my dad bought the store next door because they were selling out, that Chang Sun Store. Then he moved the tailor (shop). We moved over to that building. And we used the front of the old building just as a sewing shop. He hired two ladies to sew for him, and they did piecework. Those days, I think they used to pay forty cents for a khaki pants. You know, to sew one of those. And a woolen pants, he would pay one dollar. But those ladies were fast, you know. There was one lady, actually she was a young girl, she was fast. I think she could sew about three a day, three or four.

WN: So she was making like--if she made three a day, she could make like $1.20 . . .

RC: Dollar twenty, $1.60, yeah.

WN: Which is more than what they were making on the plantation.

RC: Oh yeah, plantation was still dollar a day. Like a woolen pants---later, I learned how to sew and I could sew khaki pants or woolen pants. But with me, I could just sew one woolen pants a day, that's it.

(Laughter)

RC: I wasn't that fast. In fact, khaki pants, I think I could sew only two, I think. Two, that was it. (Chuckles)

WN: Your tailoring was mostly---did you folks sew work clothes, too? Denim, 'ahina?

RC: Yeah, yeah, everything. You know, one pants that's hard to make, I mean, to cut and stuff, was the riding breeches. All these plantation lunas and foreman like that, they ride horse all the time. So they come and they want riding breeches. And that was hard. Hard to design. My dad got pretty good at it. In fact, he got so good that even Haole foremen from other plantations used to come and have him make. Because, especially where they have the hard time is by the knee and the calf. Those days, no zippers, so everything is button. So the thing got to fit good. And then they put their boots on. So, was hard to fit, you know. He got pretty good on that. Of course, the beginning he used to have hard time, I know. He had quite a few rejects. They didn't like it, things like that, but later he got pretty good. But as far as work clothes, those days, denim--we used to call that 'ahina--'ahina pants was dollar. I think, dollar quarter [$1.25] or something like that,

that's all.

WN: You used to sell it directly from your store?

RC: Yeah, they come in . . .

WN: You sell . . .

RC: No, no. Everything was made to order, not ready-made. We didn't sell anything ready-made.

WN: Oh. So if you wanted ready-made kind, you go to the plantation store to buy?

RC: Yeah, I guess so, I guess so.

Those days and compared to today, I think the most expensive thing to me was the shoes. Oh, and for that matter, clothes, too, I guess. But, shoes, work shoes, cost $5.00, you know. In other words, if was in relation to today, you gotta work five days to buy one pair of shoes. To me, that was expensive.

Suits, you know, the best material, like gabardine, or serge, those days, would cost--just a coat and a trousers--about $45.00. Yeah, so you work forty-five days. (Chuckles)

WN: That's expensive, huh?

RC: Yeah. Well, rice those days ranged between--you know, go up and down--but I think the cheap[est] was about $3.00, $3.50 a bag, 100-pound, to $5.00, $6.00 a bag.

WN: Who was your main clientele?

RC: Main, I would say, was the Filipino workers. Because, well, those days, the other nationalities, they didn't buy too much clothes. In fact, most would buy, one suit would be for all occasions. You go to weddings, parties, funerals, everybody wear the same suit. But the Filipinos, they really like to dress up, so wouldn't be unusual for a Filipino man to have three suits.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: Okay, how did your father, in the early days, get his material?

RC: Oh, you mean the fabric?

WN: Yeah.

RC: Oh. All from stores in Honolulu. Those days, what stores did they have? Like, they had [H. Hackfeld and Company]. [H. Hackfield and Company], I think, became Amfac. And then Davies, Theo H. Davies. What other companies? Oh, there were Japanese stores like Kawashima. I don't know whether they still in business. Kawashima Shoten or something, and who else? And they all used to send what they call drummers--salesman--out to the [neighbor] islands. They come once a month or something like that. And then, we would order from them. And . . .

WN: They would come from Honolulu?

RC: Yeah. Let's see. There was one--gee, the thing is I've forgotten what company he worked for, but I think this salesman lived on Kaua'i. And he was about the only one, I think, lived on Kaua'i. The rest all came over. At that time, they all used to hire taxi or whatever you call it, from Nawiliwili Transportation Company. They used to have this service for all these salesman. You know, kind of a big car, where they can carry all their samples and things like that. And this one chauffeur would just like be assigned to the person maybe for one week. He'd go around to the different places.

WN: Where would the drummers stay?

RC: Usually, they stayed in Lihu'e. I think they stayed down at--there was a Kuboyama Hotel in Nawiliwili, and that was the favorite hotel for them. And then, he [father] used to deal with some of the stores in Kaua'i. Like there was this Hofgaard store [Hofgaard and Company] in Waimea, but that was later when he kind of tried to go into the grocery business, too, in addition to the tailoring.

WN: Oh, yeah?

RC: Yeah, so, he tried that. I think the idea was, if you have a grocery store, you buy wholesale. So the family eat wholesale. You know what I mean? And at the same time . . .

WN: When did he start that?

RC: After we moved to the new building.

WN: Oh, so after 1926?

RC: Yeah, must have been--let's see. He started that about, I think when I was about thirteen years old. Somewhere in that, because, let's see, fourteen and thirteen--yeah, '27. About then, because I had to go deliver rice. And [near] that ball field in front of our store, there was a railroad track, I remember, it was kind of high, above the (road). And then on the other side, there was some houses, people lived there, and I had to go and deliver a bag of rice over there. I was about thirteen, I think.

So I load this thing on a Model-T. Alongside the track, there was

no road that went on the other side. So we had to carry the thing over the track and take it to the house. And I remember putting the bag on the running board, and then you kind of squat down and put the thing on your shoulder. And then you stand up. Oh, boy. So I stood up all right, I started walking over the track, and boy, I almost lost the load. My knees went down, and then I came up. I delivered it, but, boy, tsk.

And those days, I think rice was selling for about five dollars a bag, 100-pound. And the profits on that was only fifty cents. Those days, if you could make dollar on a bag of rice, then you would be all right. But, I don't know whether at that time we made a dollar, but I know later came down to about fifty cents on a bag of rice.

WN: (Chuckles) So how long did that last? The grocery part?

RC: Ah, (pause), oh, it lasted quite a while, I think, quite a few years. But it never did develop, you know. In fact, slowly, it just. . . . So, if that was '27, I don't know, maybe '30, I think, yeah, maybe up to 1930 . . .

WN: Where were the goods kept? I mean . . .

RC: Right in the same place. Tailor shop. It was just one corner, you know.

WN: Rice, and what else?

RC: Oh, a few canned goods, you know, stuff like that. Never did pan out. But, at least, I guess, the idea was we had the connection to buy wholesale. Because, everything I remember those days, you buy a slab of bacon, you buy a whole leg of ham. Vienna sausage we buy one case. It's everything like that.

Those days, after we moved to the new place, my father, in the back of the house, we build chicken coop and raised chicken. So, as far as eggs, oh, we had all the eggs we could eat. And so, he buy, maybe, say a ham, one leg. My mother never used to have to. . . . We never used to eat together too much, you know, because my parents, they busy in the front, in the store. Only thing my mother make sure, is you get a pot of rice all the time and maybe soup sometime. And the kids would---you hungry, you come in. You get eggs. You slice yourself some ham, you fry yourself some ham and fry your eggs. And the rice there, and then, that's it.

(Interview stops, then resumes.)

RC: Only maybe, supper time, everybody would kind of eat together, and maybe breakfast. But, lunch like that, everybody eat any old time. They just come in eat whenever they want.

WN: Did you folks eat Korean food?

RC: Oh, yeah, yeah. Oh, another thing is, I don't know exactly when it began, but my father hired a Filipino workman to work with him, and it was just like a apprentice program. Because you hire this guy, you give him board, lodging. He used to eat with us, just like family. And my father teach him how to sew. And he goes with my dad, together out in the camp. So, he was just like a salesman, interpreter, you know. But, I'm not too sure when he first started that. I must have been at least ten years old when he started, I think.

WN: He went out to the camps with your father and spoke Ilocano . . .

RC: Yeah. Talk and help sell and whatever. In fact, in the period that I remember, I think there were three of them. Different times, of course, but. Like maybe, this fellow, he works with my dad for a few years, then maybe he goes back to the Philippines. Then, he hire somebody else, same deal. I think there were about three of them that I remember. And, they eat with us, they all learn how to eat kimchee, hot stuff. (Laughs)

WN: They were bachelors?

RC: Bachelors, right. In fact, I think the last person he had work, later he got married to a local girl. And after he got married, he started his own business.

WN: His own tailor shop?

RC: Yeah.

WN: Is that right? That's good.

RC: Yeah. The three that we had were all really nice people. All really nice.

WN: You told me that you also went with your father up to the camps.

RC: Yeah.

WN: What did you do?

RC: Oh. (Chuckles) I think when I first started going out with him I was pretty young. Must have been about eight, nine years old, I think. I actually was just to sit in the car and watch the clothes, goods, while he went and delivered to each customer. At that time he had a Model-T Ford, touring [car]. So, no way of locking up the car. And we used to take all the clothes out in a suitcase, the ones that were to be delivered. They ordered previously. And so instead of taking the whole suitcase to the house, just take out the one to that particular house. He'd go over and transact business and I would stay in the car and kind of watch the suitcase, I guess.

(Laughter)

WN: Did you have any problems?

RC: No, those days, people would never think of robbing a person like that, outright. Maybe if nobody were around, they might take it. But, never with people. So, was pretty safe, as far as that.

WN: So, your father would go out, first, to take orders?

RC: Yeah, yeah.

WN: How did he do that? I mean, how would he know where to stop?

RC: Oh, as far as that, just like any other salesman. Door to door. You just go to any house where you think, take a chance. And ask if they interested in making a pants or whatever. And sometimes they say, "Oh, yeah. What kind of material you got?" You got to show them the sample, eh?

WN: What kind of---you mean, was just a piece of cloth?

RC: Yeah. You know that pinking scissors, shears, eh? You know, the one that cuts in . . .

WN: Zig-zag.

RC: Yeah, points, eh?

WN: Yeah.

RC: You just get any kind material, just cut a piece out. And then you have it in a binder, or whatever. You show them, they look. With our customers, I guess just like today. You have to know, more or less, what you think they'd like.

Like those days, most of the Filipino customers, they bachelors, so they liked something kind of flashy. One material he bought was something like rayon, or something, but when you kind of move it around, you have red, and green, and that thing all comes out at different angles, different color. And, oh, that thing sold real good.

Everything those days was, I guess, same as today. Styles come in and go out. At one time, corduroy was the thing, the fad. Then next thing was linen. And then, the style of the trousers went bell-bottom. And there's always somebody that goes to the extreme. You know that we made bell-bottoms that were thirty inches--you know, that's more than the normal waist, eh? Yeah, and these young people, they wanted big bell-bottom. And was a good thing that linen came in wide width, you know, the material. Otherwise, never make something like that.

WN: So you folks made linen suits?

RC: Yeah. Oh, that was the fad. We used to sell lot of linen suits, pants, you know. Young people, they like that.

WN: So you folks sold just the coat and the pants? What about the shirt and tie?

RC: Ah, no. We sold shirt, but not too much. Vest, yeah, we made vests. But, the shirts, I don't know, people didn't make too much shirts.

WN: What about ties?

RC: No. No ties at all. In those days, the companies' drummers used to send, sometime, big catalog, you know. Just the styles. Those days, just showing the different styles. And so, one time you would have narrow bottom. Same thing like your coats. The lapels always change, yeah? One time you would have this way, and the other time would be the other, opposite way. And you would have narrow lapels and wide. But then, what we noticed was, it always comes back. Maybe might take seven, eight years, but the thing come back. You know, just like a circle.

WN: So when the salesman came with the book that had the styles, they would also sell you folks the pattern, then? So you folks know how to do it?

RC: No. They, gee, I don't know, that's a good question. No, either they gave us or they sold us this book, you know, had the styles. And you just show to the customers whatever they want, if they . . .

WN: So how did your parents know how to cut the pattern?

RC: That's the thing. My dad, I don't know how he learned it. Although I learned how to sew, I could sew pants and coat, but I never did learn how to cut. (Pause) Of course, he had some patterns, and I remember [in] the beginning he used to lay it out and adjust the size. Maybe the pattern is thirty-six or something, then maybe if the guy is thirty-eight, maybe he'd make adjustments or something, I think. That part there, I'm not sure how he figured it out.

WN: So when your dad went out to the camps--you and your dad--he would take the order and then if they said they want something, he would measure them?

RC: Mm hmm [yes]. Yeah, you measure. And you have a book. You write down the guy's name, where, and the measurement, the material. Then he would make the stuff. Then the next payday, he would deliver the thing. The guy would try it on, and if everything is okay, then maybe, he pays so much down. Like if he ordered a suit, say forty-five dollars, I would say the normal payment would be about ten dollars, I think, the first payment. Then after that he would pay five dollars a month, or something like that.

WN: So only on payday he would deliver . . .

RC: Yeah, yeah.

WN: . . . the suit?

RC: Unless the guy says he wants it earlier, or something. Then we go special. But usually, was payday. Because, we went all the way out to Kīlauea Plantation on the east side, and Kekaha Plantation on the west side, so unless that person would make a good down payment or something, kind of expensive just to deliver one suit.

WN: So they make the down payment after they put down the order?

RC: Mm hmm [yes]. [The down payment was made after the suit was delivered.]

WN: I see.

RC: We tried to get them to put deposit when they order, but that was hard, hard to do. (Chuckles)

WN: Did anybody not take the suit after they ordered?

RC: Well, maybe we had, I think. Maybe one or---very seldom, I think. In fact, I know we had problem where in one month the guy get fat, and the thing tight. We get problem. (Chuckles) Tell the guy, "Chee, you got fat!"

(Laughter)

WN: It takes about one month to make? Took about one month to make?

RC: Well, every payday, so it's about one month. That's why in a way, maybe not too good, that one-month business. You never can tell the guy . . .

WN: Did anybody not pay?

RC: Oh, yeah, sure. Get lot of cases they don't pay. Deadbeats, you know. And we used to send them to collectors, some of the deadbeat accounts. In fact, there was this fellow, Henriques. He lived in Kapa'a. I don't know whether he was a lawyer or just a court practitioner or what, but he used to be one of those. His business was collecting dead accounts, or whatever. And he would charge 25 percent. So, we used to give him a few, but not too much.

WN: People would say that a lot of merchants would go to the pier to try and catch people . . .

RC: Oh, yeah. We had to do that every boat night. I think, those days, boat night was twice a week. I think was Tuesdays and Saturdays, or something like that. And we had to go, every [boat] night, every

pier, never fail. Because, those days, almost every boat night, somebody leaving.

Especially, like the Filipinos, I think when they first came to Hawai'i, they all intended to go back to the Philippines. You know, make a few thousand dollars and go back and buy land or whatever. They figured, if you have few thousand dollars, you considered a rich man in Philippines. They all had that intention of going back, see.

And lot of them, they come here and they have this contract with the plantation to, say, raise a certain field of cane. And then these people would work all kind hours. They just like on their own, you know. They cultivate whenever, if had to go work Sundays, they go and work Sundays. They have two-year crop. At the end of two years, whatever harvest they have, then they come out with a bonus. And sometime, the bonus big.

WN: So they [got] paid by the tonnage of cane . . .

RC: Something like that. And [it depended upon] the price of the sugar at that time. And sometimes, they make real good.

WN: So it's like a contract with the plantation?

RC: Yeah, yeah.

WN: Oh, I see.

RC: Depending, I guess, how big the field is, but sometimes only about five of them, maybe four, contract with one field.

WN: So when your father took orders, like that, he had to measure them. So they had to be home, right, the people? When did you folks go?

RC: We usually try to time it so that after they pau hana. So four-thirty, or something like that, they come home. Maybe they wash up, and all that, so maybe between four-thirty and five. And usually we go payday. Well, payday, usually we don't take too much orders, because we more interested in collecting what people owe. So we looking for those people that owe us money. But then, you never can get all of them at once. So next day, maybe, you going for the remainder, the people you missed. And then, you kind of take orders at the same time, if you have time. Usually, you take orders when you kind of trying to meet some people, a few, and you have time. But then you got to take orders, too, anyway. For instance, if, say, we don't get much orders on payday. We got to get work, so then we got to make special trip and just go and sell. Any time of the month, so we can get work for the workman. Stuff like that.

WN: So you would go mostly to Kōloa? Or did you go to all over the island?

RC: Mostly was all over. I would say most of our business, was--on the east side--would be, like Grove Farm Plantation. You know, Puhi? We had quite a few customers there. Then Līhu'e Plantation, we had some there. Then, Moloa'a Plantation. That was more like, I think, more pineapple, they raised pineapple those days. And Kīlauea.

WN: Kīlauea is far, eh?

RC: Yes. That's where Princeville [is today]. Kīlauea.

WN: So then you would go, after pau hana, you would go to Kīlauea?

RC: Over there, yeah. But we would more likely go there to collect money from somebody or deliver something, but we wouldn't just go there if there wasn't anybody to see. Kind of far just to take a chance and sell, eh? So that place like that, would be more payday, we would . . .

WN: But sometime or other you had to go up there to take order, eh?

RC: Yeah, that would be usually payday, after payday, because we'd be catching, trying to collect from some stragglers, or people we cannot get hold of. Then we would take orders at the same time. And same thing with on the west side. Where we had quite a bit of business was near Lāwa'i and Kalāheo. In that area there was lot of camps. We used to call it Lāwa'i Camp, but I don't know what it is now, today. Place like Kekaha, we'd go, but not too often. Then, we go Kōloa, New Mill, and Kukui'ula.

WN: So all these plantations you went to, did you go mainly just to the Filipino camps?

RC: Yeah.

WN: So you didn't go to Japanese Camps or other places at all?

RC: Not too much. Unless they came and. . . . Was mostly Filipino camp. Like, Grove Farm Plantation, I guess they had sections, where more Filipinos lived. So, I guess, you would call it Filipino camp. Although I don't think they called it that. They just called it Grove Farm, you know.

WN: But Kōloa, they had Filipino Camp.

RC: Oh, yeah. They had all the different camps.

WN: I see. I was wondering, did your brothers and sisters help, too?

RC: My younger brothers, yeah. At one time or other, they had to go out. Maybe not as much, not as long a period as I did, but they had to. Because I remember some of them grumbling up, too.

(Laughter)

RC: They have to go out. So, they all, I think, they had their turn.

WN: Were there other tailor shops in Kōloa?

RC: Yeah, later. In fact, there was--let's see. Gee, I don't know when they came in, though. There was one called Bonilla Tailor Shop. That was right next to Muronaka Bakery [Restaurant]. They had one there. And then later, [Masato] Nishita opened one down near the hospital, Kōloa Hospital. But I must have been at least well into high school age, or maybe after that, I'm not too sure. I can't recall.

WN: What about the other tailor shops in the other camps that you went to? Was there any kind of competition between you folks and them?

RC: There weren't too many tailor shops on Kaua'i. Kapa'a had one tailor shop, Chu Tailor Shop. Gee, I don't know. That's about all I remember.

WN: You said you had to get your driver's license early. How old were you when you got your license?

RC: (Laughs) Gee, I must have been about fourteen, I think. Because, you see, what happened was, my older sister was going to [Kaua'i] High School [in Līhu'e]. She's two years older than I am. So then I was supposed to start going to high school too, you know, transportation, eh? And those days there was no bus or anything like that, so everybody had to carpool with somebody else. And I guess there were going to be two of us to go, so my dad decided to buy a car and we run a car pool. So he bought a car for me to drive. And we started a car pool and some of the passengers I had was Dr. [A. H.] Waterhouse's daughter, Marjorie, Marjorie Waterhouse. She was one of the passengers. Okamura, not James Okamura, but the other Okamura. And I had Teves, [Manuel] Teves' daughter was one of the passengers. Well, that's all I can remember.

WN: And then you drove to Līhu'e?

RC: Yeah. Because those days, Līhu'e [i.e., Kaua'i High School] was the only high school--four-year high school. Waimea had junior high school. Only two years, then they had to come [to Līhu'e], too. So we went to Līhu'e, and I drove for four years, carpool. (Chuckles)

WN: So you were below age, then? Or . . .

RC: Yeah, I guess so. One year, not one year, maybe few months.

(Laughter)

RC: Because I think those days, I think was fifteen, eh?

WN: Did you use that car for the business, too?

RC: Yeah.

WN: Deliver?

RC: Yeah, and collect. In fact, later, my dad and I split the island, because sometime payday on both side. And no way we could go from one end to the other end, you know? So we split. I would go one end and he would go the other side.

WN: So one would go all the way to Waimea?

RC: If, say, Kekaha Plantation paid off that day, then I had to go Kekaha.

WN: In other words . . .

RC: And maybe Kīlauea paid off and he had to go the other side.

WN: Hoo. Long way.

RC: Those days, the paydays were all within a period of ten days. From the first to the tenth. Some [got] paid the same day, some maybe next day, you know. So as long as it was at least one day apart, not too bad, you know. Because those days, I guess all young men, they all spend their money fast. And those days, they used to have these taxi dance. You know, ten cents a dance kind. Oh, lot of them they go to dance hall, they spend all their money. In fact, I used to go to the dance hall looking for them.

WN: Oh, yeah? (Chuckles)

RC: Yeah. If there was a dance hall around in that area.

WN: Gee, when you used to do that, go look for them, or when you went to the piers, and so forth, were you nervous? You know? Or did they try to . . .

RC: Not too nervous, but. . . . Oh, I remember once, my younger brother and I, we went. And we got hold of this guy and he was leaving, and he was one of those smart guys, I guess. So I remember he telling me, "Oh, you Korean," he says, "I don't have to pay you. I'm going home, but I don't have to pay you." Right in my face. And he had a few of his friends around, too, eh? So they all, kind of in a circle, and here I'm telling him if I cannot collect money, I wanted to get the goods back. So, that one there, we lost. We lost. We just left.

WN: What can you do, yeah?

RC: Yeah. Win some, lose some, I guess.

WN: Mr. Chung, you think we can continue another time? Finish up?

RC: Yeah, I guess so. After all, we started, eh? I mean, I can't very well leave it hanging, I guess.

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 15-59-2-87 and 15-60-2-87

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Richard Cherldoo Chung (RC)

November 17, 1987

Mānoa, O'ahu

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Richard Chung on November 17, 1987 at his home in Mānoa, O'ahu. The interviewer is Warren Nishimoto.

Okay. Today we're going to talk about the Korean community in Kōloa.

RC: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: Was there a Korean community?

RC: Oh, yeah. We had a Korean Camp. I was pretty young then. So, to me, the camp was big. To me, there were a lot of people there. I used to go to the camp, walk around, you know, just fool around. But I didn't go, say, to the Spanish Camp, because that was far, far away. Later, I got to where I went to all the different camps, as they were called then. Gee, the Korean Camp that I remember, I must have been maybe between six and maybe ten years old. There was a family, I think was the You family, it was a big family, they had lot of girls. The man was a sewing machine salesman. I had three aunts that lived in the camp.

WN: What were your aunts' names?

RC: Let's see. One was married to a Park, and they moved to Honolulu later. Then another aunt was married to a Kang, and she moved to Honolulu later. And there was another aunt that came over as a picture bride, and married my uncle, who was the younger brother of my dad. And when my dad first came from Korea, my uncle was a bachelor and he came with my father. Then later, my aunt, and then they got married.

Outside of those people, I don't remember too many other families. Because, I guess, too young, eh? And my association was only with our immediate family. We had a church in the Korean Camp, and every Sunday, I guess, there was a. . . . One thing I remember at that time, there were two church factions. My parents were Mimi Kyohoe. And apparently that means Methodist. Because I know we were

Methodist. The other side, we used to call them Kidok Kyohoe. But what that stood for in English I don't know [Independent Christian Church]. Till today, I don't know. I don't know whether that's Protestant or whatever. And sometimes they used to have friction.

WN: But they were both members of the same church?

RC: No. That's the thing. They weren't members of the same church. They used the same church, only one church.

WN: Used the same building.

RC: Yeah, building. But you know, I think the building was provided by the plantation. I'm not sure about that, but, I think.

WN: How big was the church, in terms of size? I mean, how many people do you think it held?

RC: Let me see, maybe hundred at the most, I think. I don't think more than hundred. Maybe not, maybe hundred would be standing room. And I guess, they took turns using the facility. So there were friction, once in a while. I don't know why they had their friction, but, I was too young.

WN: So each group had their own minister?

RC: Yeah. And I guess, they held services at different times. So maybe that's where the friction came up, I don't know.

When the people moved out of the camp, I really don't know. Only thing I know is that, after a while, there was no Koreans there. My uncle and my aunt, they moved to Grove Farm Plantation. And I think most of the other families moved to Honolulu.

WN: So when you say Korean Camp being mostly Koreans, you talking about small-kid time?

RC: Yeah, I must have been, oh, I would say, six years old, ten years old, somewhere in that area.

WN: About 1920, around that time then?

RC: Yeah, '20 to maybe '27 at the most, 1927. I don't know.

WN: Was there anything that separated the camps? Was Korean Camp next to Japanese Camp?

RC: Yeah. There was no set boundary. Let's see, Korean Camp, then Japanese Camp was next, further up, and Portuguese Camp was further in, towards the [mountain]. I'm looking at it from where I lived going into the camp. So [looking] towards New Mill up to the mountains [from Kōloa town]. The Japanese Camp was [to the] left of the Korean Camp. And the Portuguese Camp was further in, on the

other side.

WN: So there was no stone wall or anything?

RC: No, I don't recall anything like that. It's just---maybe a Korean house would be here and a Japanese house would be the next house, and the camp would be from there on in, eh? Yeah, that's the way I remember.

WN: Did the Koreans get along with the Japanese?

RC: Yeah, in a sense. Let me--I don't know how to phrase it, but there was no fights, or anything like that. So they got along in that. But I don't think they associated socially. Although, I remember the principal of the Japanese[-language] school, which was right in front of our place, came over to talk to my dad. He told my dad if my dad wanted to send any of us to Japanese school, they welcome to. I didn't have time, he couldn't send me anyway, but maybe the younger ones below me, he could have. You know kids, the parents got to tell them go. They don't want to go school, eh? Any kind of school. So nobody going to volunteer.

WN: Was there any kind of Korean[-language] school?

RC: When I was going to high school, the Korean church was in Kapaia, and we had a minister. There was a Reverend Hyun, H-Y-U-N, and he--the family moved to Honolulu--but he was the minister then, and he used to teach us, whoever, I guess for a nominal fee. And that would be right after school. I didn't go because I had to go help my father. But I know some of my younger brothers went to the school. But it didn't last long, so.

WN: So by the time you went to high school, the Korean church in Kōloa was not there anymore?

RC: Oh, no. That's the thing, you see. I think when the Koreans moved out--that was when I was about ten years old, I'm not sure when, but anyway, the whole place was just like, I guess, other people just moved in. So there was no more Korean church or anything like that.

WN: When you were young and had the Korean church in Kōloa, what kind of activities do you remember them sponsoring, or community kind of thing?

RC: Oh, let's see, 1910, the Japanese took over Korea, right? So, one activity I know they had here was they all tried to maintain the Korean independence, so every year on March 1, I think, we had gathering. All the Koreans in the island, we used to gather, usually down at Lāwa'i Beach. That beach was owned by McBryde. I think was Walter McBryde. He was nice. He opened the beach to the public. So we all usually had the gathering down there. Every March 1, all these people, just like a big picnic, everybody potluck, bring your own food. The older people, I guess, they

talked about independence and all that, but us, young kids, we just go for the picnic and the food. That was the big thing, I think, where all the Koreans would get together. In fact, as the years went by, it kind of got smaller, where people in Kekaha and Makaweli would have their own. It kind of split. They would have their own celebration and stuff.

WN: So after the Koreans left Kōloa you saw that you didn't have that anymore?

RC: No, we didn't have. In fact, when I was about fourteen years old or something like that, gee, I think in Kōloa there were only my family and the Kim family that were still working for the plantation, in the camp. There was a bachelor in New Mill, I remember, but that's about it. In fact, the Kim family, they moved to Honolulu--the children--I'm sure they're still here.

Then after that, the association was, well, the church in Kapaia. So, people from Kapa'a and (pause) oh, yeah, and in Grove Farm, there were quite a few Koreans in Grove Farm. We all congregated at the church, so that was the only time, I think, Sunday, when they had church, where everybody would kind of get together.

WN: So the church in Kōloa, was that the only Korean church in the district? Or did each plantation have a Korean church?

RC: Gee, I really---oh, you mean, at that time, when they had a church?

WN: Yeah. So in other words, the people that went to the Korean church in Kōloa, were they only from Kōloa, or from all over?

RC: Oh, no, no. Only from Kōloa. So each plantation must have had their own group. (Pause) Like in Grove Farm, there were at that time my uncle, and then there was, oh, about two more families I know for sure. There was the Cho family and. . . . Anyway, another family, you know, were in Grove Farm. The other two families, whether they were originally from Kōloa, that, I don't know, I'm not sure.

Even when I was young, I don't remember playing with the Korean boys. As an example, the Kim family, they had boys, but I don't remember playing with them.

WN: They were your age?

RC: Yeah, there was one my age. In fact, I remember playing more with the Chinese boy next door. There was a Chinese family next door, and the boy, I remember playing with him. And playing with lot of Japanese boys.

WN: The Kim family lived in the camp?

RC: Mm, yeah. And the boys were kind of quiet. The father was, I

guess, kind of serious father. But the reason, maybe, for that is, the ballpark was right in front our house. And the Japanese school was right there. So, after school or what, everybody congregate in the ballpark. So we play ball or whatever, so it's just those that come out that we get to know. The Kim boys, I guess, they don't come out so I never did get to know them that well.

WN: Since Japan was occupying Korea, did your father tell you anything about that or discourage you from mingling with Japanese, anything like that?

RC: No. One thing, I think, is that when all these immigrants first came here, I'm pretty sure that they all had intentions of going back home. Make their fortune or whatever, what they consider the fortune, maybe few thousand dollars was a fortune those days, eh? And they all, I'm sure they had intentions of going back home. My dad, I think when Japan occupied Korea, he gave up the idea of ever going back. Unless it was a free country again. So he never did think of going back.

WN: I guess that must have prevented a lot of Koreans from going back to Korea, yeah? The occupation.

RC: Maybe, yeah. Well, I know my dad told me one reason he came to Hawai'i was because he didn't like the Korean regime at that time. The way it was going, he figured, he didn't have much confidence in the King [Kojong]. I think at that time, according to what I remember, he said the king was getting very friendly with the Japanese and was giving in to lot of things that he thought maybe he shouldn't. So I guess, the way he pointed out was, he could see the handwriting on the wall.

But as far as in Kaua'i, at that time, no, there was no animosity or hatred of the Japanese people there, because after all, they not in Japan, eh? He did business with Japanese stores and all that. In fact, he got to be good friends with Mr. [Mankichi] Sueoka, the original. He bought all his food and stuff from them. In fact, Mr. Sueoka kinda helped him out, too, in the sense that, those days, I don't know why, but my dad never did seem to deal with banks. I mean, you know, whether it was because you don't have the credit or what. So those days, they used to have tanomoshi. And the only people that had tanomoshi was Japanese people. So, to get into that, you had to have somebody recommend you to the group. So, Mr. Sueoka said, oh, my dad wanted to get in. Because that's the only way you can kind of get a large sum of money at one time. It's just like borrowing money, so.

WN: I was wondering, since your dad was a merchant, was he considered a little bit above or more of a leader of the Korean community?

RC: Yeah. I remember people always coming over to the store, talking with him. They get problem, they come over. I remember, oh, one evening, I think they had some kind of friction with the other

religious group, and they got into a little fisticuff or something. So about three or four of them, they came over. One guy, I remember, I cannot forget, because those days, they used to have these straw hat, and that hat was all bust up, so. And my dad, he was kind of active in the church. Those days, I don't know what you call them, whether he was considered to be a deacon or something. Those days, I don't know if they had such thing, but something like that, anyway.

WN: You being practically one of the few Korean children and you were mingling with Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, did you feel different at all?

RC: (Pause) Oh, yeah. You have that feeling of being a minority, sure. I felt that like the Japanese kind of looked down on me, you see. I had that feeling. In fact, even when you going to high school, the girls even, you kind of feel that the elder Japanese, the parents of the girl, they don't like you too much. They rather the daughter didn't be friends with you. There was always that feeling, I would say. And I guess even the Koreans same thing. I guess those days, everybody they rather you stick to your own nationality. In other words, I don't think they believe too much in intermarriage. So, maybe that was it, I don't know. Everybody want, you know, if you Korean, you marry Korean. If you Japanese, you marry Japanese.

WN: Did your parents encourage you to marry Korean?

RC: Oh, yeah. After when I was out of high school and working. I don't know how they find out who you go with, but we used to go to dances and all that, and we used to all mix. Japanese girls or whatever. Usually was Japanese girls, and we go to dances, and we get a good time, but nothing serious. So, no problem. But as soon as they hear something, you kind of serious, oh, then they kind of talk to you.

(Laughter)

WN: Were there other Korean merchants? Other than your father?

RC: On the island?

WN: In Kōloa.

RC: In Kōloa? No. Only my dad.

WN: No Korean store, or anything? And besides---well, you told me earlier about the rallies that used to have down at Lāwa'i Beach, but anything that the church sponsored? Like parties or picnics or anything like that? Social activities?

RC: You mean something special?

WN: Yeah.

RC: No. In those days, was, I think, just going to church on Sunday, it was not only a religious thing. After that, was a social event, because I remember usually like in Kapaia, we used to go to church. After that, we always had lunch over there. Big. So everybody had lunch there and [it was] more like a social gathering. I guess that was about the only time, you know, was possible for everybody to meet, I think. That's the reason. Outside of that, everybody was working six days a week, eh? Those days, all Monday through Saturday work. Sundays is the only holiday.

WN: What about like Christmastime? Anything special?

RC: Yeah. At Christmas, the church would have a special program and stuff like that, but same thing, you know. So, I would say those days, as far as a social just for Koreans, I guess, was just meeting at the church. That's the way it was.

WN: What did you used to do, as a kid, to have a good time?

RC: (Chuckles) Those days, money was real scarce. So everything was, we used to play baseball. Now, baseball, we didn't have gloves. We cannot play with the regular baseball. So what we used to do was, maybe we'd get hold of a beat-up ball that the regular baseball players don't want to play with. So we take off the cover and take the string off. Then we'd make a new ball. Roll the thing up, then the thing not that hard. So you can catch barehand like that. So we used to play with that.

WN: You used to use the same string? Or different string?

RC: Take off the string, and then rewind the string, and then make ball. And so, that's the way we used to play baseball.

We used to play another game. I don't know if you heard of the game, they call it peewee?

WN: Yeah.

RC: Peewee. That is easy, eh? Just a broomstick. So you make your own. And then once in a while we used to--for cowboy and Indians stuff like that--we used to make this rubber gun. You ever heard of rubber gun?

WN: No.

RC: You take old tire tubing, you cut in strips, and then you make this gun out of wood, and you stretch the rubber. Then on the back where you hook it over, when you want to shoot, fire, you just push it off.

WN: You stick your thumb up.

RC: Yeah, and you fire.

WN: Kind of like a sling, well, slingshot, but . . .

RC: No, it looked like a regular wooden gun. But then you hook it on the front, and then you pull it, stretch it back.

WN: I guess no more rubber bands, then. You had to make your own rubber band.

RC: Yeah, out of the tire tube. So I think all the kids, that's how. That was when we were real young.

WN: When you played peewee did you play it in the ballpark?

RC: Yeah, ballpark. We used to play baseball in the ballpark. As far as the rubber gun stuff, well, that was just the kids around, my neighbors. We used to play in the back of the store. In the back, you have lot of houses, so good to play because, you know, you can hide behind a corner of a house or things like that. Sneak up on the guy.

WN: What about getting into mischief?

RC: When I was real young, I didn't get into too much mischief, because my father was really strict, you know, wow, boy. Just the thought of the punishment.

WN: What was the punishment?

RC: Oh, you get beat up. Yeah, he was real strict. In fact, when I used to go to school--and those days, even the teachers were strict. You do something wrong in class, the teacher call you up to her desk. Tell you put out your hand. And if you put out this way, palms up, no way. They want the knuckles up and they give you a rap with the ruler. That's the way. Oh, the teachers were strict, too, those days. And the worse part of it was, if you do something wrong in school, and you go home and tell your parents, that's double punishment, so no sense. I never used to go home and tell my parents what the teacher did to me, or what. No way. Because those days, my parents felt that the teacher was right, the teacher wouldn't do anything wrong.

WN: I was wondering, did your father speak Korean or English at home?

RC: At home?

WN: Mm hmm [yes].

RC: Korean, but, let's see. When I was real young, yeah, I guess so. I guess he spoke lot of Korean, but he always wanted to learn [English]. I remember, every night--he's in bed, but before he go to sleep--he's reading this book, it's Korean to English or English to Korean, always reading. So, by the time we were high school age and all that, he could speak pretty good English. And he could

write pretty good.

In fact, he wanted to teach us Korean. So whenever chance, I would say I was about twelve years old, or thirteen, we used to sit down once in a while, talk. He'd talk to me in Korean so I get to learn Korean. And whatever I don't understand, I would ask him, what this mean. So in my high school days, I knew my Korean pretty good. I could understand, I could speak pretty good. Not too good but, at least better than now. Because I conversed with him all the time. But now, in fact, my wife understands better than I do. Like today, we have lot of Koreans from Korea, and when they talk to me, most of the time, I don't know what they saying. For one thing, they talk fast, eh?

WN: What about your mother? Your mother spoke English?

RC: Yeah, but very little. Not as good as my dad. And those days, I guess, lot of pidgin, they learn. But, yeah, she didn't speak too much English. More Korean.

WN: Let me turn over the tape.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: Okay, so you said that you didn't get into much mischief when you were a young boy?

RC: No. I got in mischief when I got older, I think.

(Laughter)

RC: I would say after high school, I think I made up for stuff. While I was going to high school, I never smoked. I never drank. After high school, then I learn all that stuff.

(Laughter)

WN: What about things like movies?

RC: Oh, yeah, movies. You know, those days movies was ten cents. There was a movie theater just down by the ballpark, next to the Japanese school. And was ten cents to go. I know when I was young, once in a while I used to want to go to the movie. So I ask my dad, "Oh, I want to go to a movie."

He say, "No."

Then later, once I had ten cents so I told him, "Oh, I want to go to a movie."

He says, "No."

So I say, "But I have the ten cents."

He said, "No."

So I think that's one time I got in mischief, I sneak out. I went to the movies. Came back, caught heck for it. Then I remember I told him. He says, "How come you sneak out? You supposed to ask."

I say, "Yeah, I asked but you said no." (Chuckles)

Those days, Mr. [Manuel] Teves, he was, I think, bookkeeper for the plantation office. And he used to run the theater. Then later he built his own theater down by where the first old sugar mill used to be [across the street from the present Sueoka Store]. Right in that area. Then he built his house there, too. I remember that.

WN: Wasn't there a movie theater near your house? Shinagawa?

RC: Oh, that was a Japanese theater. [Sadakichi] Iwamura was the---he brought in these Japanese movies and Japanese entertainers, too, once in a while. In Kōloa, they used to have it in the back there. And I remember, there was no chairs, just the stage about four feet above the floor. And then the floor was all covered with this straw mat. What they call that?

WN: Goza?

RC: Yeah, goza. So all the patrons, if they want to go see, they bring their own cushion. And then you go and sit down, sit on the floor, and watch. (Pause) That's all I remember about that.

WN: So movies. . . . Was there organized sports at all?

RC: In those days, yeah. Each town, if I remember, used to have their own baseball team. And later they had football teams, and they used to play against each other. And go between towns and play. But, chee, I really don't know who (chuckles) sponsored those things. At that time, I always think that maybe the plantation, but I'm not sure.

WN: Earlier we were talking about picnics and the kinds of games that you folks used to play. Or the contests that they had at picnics. Like the greased pig. What was that like? Was that at the Fourth of July picnic?

RC: Yeah. That one, they had it, I think, every Fourth of July. That was one of the main---because if you catch a pig, you take the pig. And pig, I guess, was worth quite a bit, eh? One pig. Of course, wasn't real big pig, was more or less a kind of a suckling, not too big. And usually was all young boys would try. Gee, I forget how they enclose the thing. I'm not sure whether they had a wire

enclosure, I don't know. Must be some kind of wire enclosure, I think. Maybe the people hold the wire or something. Then these people go in and just keep on chasing until the pig just exhausted, knock out, then the guy lucky enough to grab 'em and can carry 'em away, that's his.

WN: All the kids go in at one time?

RC: Yeah. And the pig is just running back and forth, eh? I guess if the pig get close to you and if you can jump on the pig and hang onto it, that's yours.

WN: You win the pig?

RC: Yeah.

WN: What else did they have?

RC: Gee, I really don't recall. I think they gave away sodas and stuff like that. I think this was sponsored by the plantation, if I'm not mistaken. Because, to go down to the beach, we used to get on the train, if you wanted to go. I don't remember going to too many of them. I don't know why.

WN: I was wondering, you know, the plantation managers lived in a certain area.

RC: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: Did you folks go there at all? At any time? Or did you ever meet the manager?

RC: Oh, yeah. As far as meeting the manager, I remember in grammar school, sometime just before school ended, the manager would come down to the school and talk to the young boys, asking them if they want to work for the plantation during the summer and would kind of encourage them to go work for the plantation. And they say, "Oh, you can make maybe fifty cents a day." That was only kalai, [hoeing] the weeds between the rows of cane. So quite a few boys would sign up. In fact, most, I think, of the young people would sign up, because no other job for somebody that young.

In fact, I remember my younger brother, he used to try. I remember he signing up to go and work for the plantation, so my mother had to go buy a lunch can. And those days, the lunch can was the type with two compartments, where the bottom, was bigger than the top. The bottom you put rice, and then the top compartment you put your okazu or whatever. And those days, the favorite was Vienna sausage and maybe fried egg, or something. So, my mother had to prepare that early in the morning because they went out about four-thirty in the morning. And then they had to go report to the building where there was a train. The train was waiting there, they would get on the train, and then the train would take them out to the work site.

(Chuckles) I remember he signing up twice, two times. But the first time, I think he'd go out and when he come back, boy, he'd be so tired he can barely get up the step of the store, you know, front, and he'd just sprawl right there. So, he would last about ten days and then that's it.

(Laughter)

RC: And then another thing they had to buy was the raincoat. But then, those days, plantation, they were kinda too shrewd for the kids, I think. Because, I remember my brother telling maybe they pay you three cents a line. I don't know how long a line is. So, they figure, oh, these kids maybe if they can make fifty cents, that's fine. But he said some of them they so good, tough, they strong, so the kids, maybe with three cents a line, they make almost dollar a day. So, next, the plantation cut 'em down. Two cents a line. And then, he says, then you move to another field, and maybe that field is real hard. Some places easy, but some places hard. And he said they pay you two cents and, here, this is harder than the one they give you three cents for.

But those days, as far as summer employment, was only the plantation or the [pineapple] cannery. Lāwa'i had a cannery [Kaua'i Pineapple Company], so either go work for the cannery or the plantation. I think more people worked for the cannery because I think they paid little better. You could make more than on the plantation. (Chuckles)

WN: So you went to Kōloa School . . .

RC: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: . . . and Kaua'i High School?

RC: Mm hmm [yes]. Those days, Kaua'i High School was the only four-year high school. Waimea was two-year, was junior high, they call it. Kapa'a---when I was going to high school, I don't think there was a Kapa'a High School. So, for that reason, Kaua'i, the people kind of get to know everybody in the island. If you go to high school, you meet just about everybody, you know, in that age. They come from Waimea, and Kīlauea, and, you know. So you get to know everybody. That's what they say. Kaua'i is one island that people know just about everybody on the island. You might not know them personally, but you know of them.

WN: Let's take a short break.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: Okay, so you graduated from Kaua'i High School in 1932?

RC: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: And then you began to work at your father's tailor shop, full-time?

RC: Yeah.

WN: When you graduated from high school, did you have any idea of what you wanted to be?

RC: No. Well, let me put it---you see, when I first started high school, the plans were that I was going to go to college. But then in my sophomore year, my dad told me that the way it looks, he cannot see where I can go to college. Because he said he needed my help. Otherwise the rest, maybe, all won't be able to go, see. So, when I was sophomore, I knew that that was it. Could just go to finish high school. So, when I started, was all college prep subjects, but after that I kind of changed to. . . . Well, for instance, I took up typing and things like that. I kind of knew that I would be working with my dad.

WN: Thirty-two was depression time?

RC: Yeah. When I was going to high school, I was working with my dad anyway. In fact, the night of graduation--at that time, I think graduation was in the evening--that was the early part of the month, so payday. So my dad didn't attend the graduation. He was out one side of the island. That day, I was out on the other side of the island and I came back, pick up my mom, and she and I, oh, we just made the graduation.

WN: Did the depression affect your dad's business?

RC: Oh, yeah. I guess, everybody. Depression was--our depression--started about '32, I think. And then, '33 on. Although they say depression [started in] 1929, I don't think Hawai'i felt the depression then.

You know, funny, looking back, I guess lot of people thought because my father was in business that we had lot of money. That's the impression I'm sure lot of people had. I guess, we, in turn, thought lot of people had lot of money, but, boy, I'm sure those days everybody struggled. I remember, sometime you had to pay bills and you got to search all over the house for money.

I guess everybody had it tough. I remember going to one of our class reunion about ten years ago and this guy, one of my classmate, he live in Anahola, and he was telling about the depression. And he gave a story. He said one summer he went to this house. I guess he thought that the lady had money, so he went over and asked the lady if he could mow her lawn for fifty cents. And she said no. And he really needed the money, so he said, "Okay, I'll mow your lawn for thirty-five cents."

She said, "No."

Oh, and him, he was kind of desperate, I guess, so he said, "Okay, okay, I'll mow your lawn for twenty-five cents."

And she still said no.

So he said, "Gee, lady, for twenty-five cents, nobody going to mow for less than that."

The lady told him, "But I don't have twenty-five cents."

So, I guess (for) everybody, was pretty rough.

WN: Did you folks have any trouble getting supplies or anything from the Mainland because of the depression time?

RC: Well, no. We didn't deal with the Mainland, I think. We deal only with Honolulu for the fabrics and all that. I guess they [still] came, but they cut down credit. In other words, they wouldn't extend you too much credit. And everything was kinda cut back.

When [Franklin] Roosevelt became president, I remember you had to turn in all your gold money. Then later you had to turn in your paper money for smaller paper money. You know, in the old days, the paper money was real big in size compared to today. Today the paper money is smaller in size. But I remember if you had gold money, you had to turn it in, and they'd issue you paper money, or something like that. And same thing with the paper money. You had to turn it in to get this new money. After a certain period, that old money would be no value. That was the decree. And at that time I thought Roosevelt was pretty smart. That way, you get an idea of how much paper money there was out, although the United States was still on the gold standard. So that way, he would know. Because I guess lot of paper money got lost or got burned. So that way, once he got all that money in, with the gold he had, he could print plenty more money again. (Chuckles)

WN: I was wondering, when you took over---after you graduated and you worked for your father, did your duties and responsibilities change?

RC: Oh, yeah. Once I started working for my father, we start work eight o'clock. You get up before then, you had breakfast, just about eight o'clock or eight-thirty, you start work. That's when I really began to learn how to sew. Before that, was strictly only summertime, or things like that, so never did [learn to sew]. In fact, I think, beginning, I was sewing pants for a while, and then later he began teaching me how to sew coat. But as far as coat, I never did really go into woolens, because that was expensive stuff. And woolen coat, you have inside linings, and all that, so that was kind of complicated and I never did get to that point. I used to sew only linen coats and things that were just single, no lining. But as far as the hours, oh, yeah, I had to put in full hours. Eight o'clock, you sew until about maybe three o'clock or so. Then three o'clock you go get ready, get dressed to go out to the camp to

solicit business, or deliver clothes, or whatever. Depending on what time of the month it was.

WN: I'm wondering, when you went out in the camps, did you have to wear a suit or coat?

RC: Oh, yeah. My dad believe in, you got to advertise, eh? So even when I was going to high school, my brother and I, I think we were pretty well-dressed guys. Because as far as making clothes for us, he used to make because he felt that we were advertising the clothes. The wares. But then, (chuckles) one thing, my dad was pretty frugal, try to save. Like materials, he always try to don't waste any material. I remember when I was going to grammar school, all this khaki material. With the leftover he'd make pants, trousers for us. But those days, the dyes were not as good as today, not too permanent, not too reliable. So, I remember once he made trousers for me, and I wore the thing. In the beginning, it looked just like one material, same material. But after once wash, oh, the thing came one side dark, one side light.

(Laughter)

WN: So when you went in the camps, did you wear a tie and a coat?

RC: Yeah. Tie, coat, oh, really dress up. In fact, lot of the new materials, of course, if we wanted, I think he would make [for us], all depending. Not all the new materials, but something different.

WN: I'm wondering, who kept the books for the business?

RC: I kept the books for the business.

WN: You did.

RC: Of course, those days, bookkeeping was kind of simple, not like today. What did we have? You know, come to think of it, I used to keep the books for him and we had only a sales book, (pause) yeah, only a sales book, I think. As far as the accounts, well, was only a ledger and was only a list of accounts by camps, I think.

WN: Did you go by name, or by <u>bangō</u> number?

RC: No, name. Only name. So the list would be by the camp, and then all the names. And would be a column of the balance and how much was paid. Then every month we'd make a new list.

WN: In this period here, were there other people employed at the tailor shop?

RC: Yeah. You mean, when I was working there?

WN: Full-time?

RC: There were two girls, two ladies. But they work piecework. So those days, the rate was, khaki pants was forty cents or sixty cents, I'm not sure, per pants to sew. And woolen pants was dollar. To sew one woolen pants. That was the rate. Of course, those days, plantation workers [were paid] one dollar a day, too. So wasn't, I guess, that bad. By that time, they had electricity and all that. So they work in my dad's place next door. Chee, (chuckles) I'm not sure whether the sewing machine belonged to them or belong to my dad. I'm kinda not too sure. But it was all electric machines. And the irons and all that, that was all my dad's irons, I remember. I think the machine was my dad's also. So they only come in and sew.

WN: How many machines were there in the shop?

RC: In that side, well, there were only two girls, so two sewing machines. You would have two sewing machines and one buttonhole machine. You had this gadget that you attach to make buttonholes. Too much trouble to take it off and put it back on, so that was one machine for buttonhole. Then each would have their regular machine to sew.

WN: What did you use? What did you sew on?

RC: Oh, we had in the next building, we had machines there, too.

WN: Oh, oh, oh.

RC: Yeah, each had their own machine, sewing machine.

WN: So your father had one, you had one.

RC: Mm hmm [yes]. And my mom had one.

WN: You told me earlier that when you were small, your father had hired Filipino salesmen.

RC: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: Did you have any at this time?

RC: No, I think when I worked full-time, no.

WN: So you did all mostly the sales?

RC: Yeah, was either my dad and myself.

WN: So why do you think that was? Was that because the Filipinos could speak better English? Or . . .

RC: You mean, because we quit hiring . . .

WN: Yeah.

RC: No. I think it was just because I worked full-time, plus, I think there was no need for two. You know, the cars, sedans, came out after that, right? Prior to that we only had that open car, you know, touring, so you couldn't lock it. But then when the sedans came out, you could put your stuff in there, lock it, so there was no need for two people to go out together to the same place. I think that was one reason. Plus, I guess another reason was, maybe the practice of hiring, giving them board and room, I think kinda was out. Maybe there was nobody that wanted to do that type of work. But we had good people though. I remember three of them distinctly, and they were all real nice people. Nice, nice people. Got along real good with them. They were very loyal, faithful, good workers.

WN: So after a while, well, I guess your dad's tailor business really grew, huh?

RC: Yeah, the inventory came bigger and bigger until in 1937 I told my dad I didn't want to stay in the tailor business. That's when I got a job with Mutual Telephone [Company]. And I mentioned to him that since I'm not going to work with him, that he should begin to cut back on his inventory.

WN: Prior to that, you said that the tailor shop was the biggest on Kaua'i?

RC: Yeah, I think inventory-wise, we were the biggest. And I don't think that was only my opinion. Because people mentioned it to us. They thought we were the biggest.

WN: So what made you decide to not want to continue with the business?

RC: (Chuckles) Well, I thought you had to work too hard for a dollar. First you would have to go out and get the business. Then you would come home and you have to make the pants or whatever it is. Then you have to go out and deliver the thing. And if you got the payment in full, fine. But if you didn't, then you have to go back again and collect the balance. So you working four times for just the one dollar, eh? To me, that was working too hard.

WN: How many hours a week you think you worked?

RC: Oh. Gee, when it was the early part of the month, maybe the first half of the month, oh, the hours were long. Because, say, if you work from eight [a.m.], it was nothing unusual to come home eleven o'clock in the night. You know, all day. Eight [a.m.] to eleven in the night. Oh, there were times we'd come home one o'clock in the morning. So, the hours were long. Towards the second half, not that long, but the first half usually. That was payday, eh?

WN: Did your father want you to take over?

RC: You mean, the . . .

WN: The business.

RC: Oh, the early part? Oh, yeah. When I just got out of high school and all that, yeah, that was his intention, that I continue after him.

WN: So '37 he was scaling down, then, the inventory?

RC: Yeah, yeah. Kind of just sell and buy only whatever he felt he needed, but don't buy any new stuff. So when World War II broke out [in 1941], he had it down to almost half of what he had originally.

WN: When did the business eventually close?

RC: Gee, let's see, 1946 he was still in business but was really slow then. I mean, small. In a small way. Because during the war, too, I don't think he could get anything. So he was just selling what he had. And in--hmm, when was that? Gee, I forget. Anyway, he bought some property up in 'Ōma'o, and so he spent more time up there. So, gradually. . . . But he had the tailor shop until he passed away.

WN: When did he pass away?

RC: Nineteen forty-nine.

END OF SIDE TWO

TAPE NO. 15-60-2-87; SIDE ONE

WN: What was Kōloa like during the wartime?

RC: Gee, I really can't say. Oh, I was there, I was there part of the time. I was in Kōloa, and then I moved to Līhu'e. But during the war, everything was blackout. I don't know if you remember, but all the cars, you had to paint the headlights and only have a small, small hole for the light. So, was real blackout.

I worked for the phone company, so I had to go out sometimes at night whenever. Those days, all doctors, hospital, I guess police and fire, they had priority. In other words, if their telephone line don't work, we had to go out and try and fix it. And the flashlight, same thing. Was only one small pinhole where the light come out. But then, those days, most of the telephone lines were still, they call it local battery but we used to call it magneto. In other words, there's a central operator sitting at the switchboard. And you know, you crank the phone and talk. That type, you see. So, we go out and, that way, we could kind of locate the trouble, just by elimination. In other words, you go out so much, maybe half-way, and get up on the pole, and find the line and call in to the operator. And then if you can get the operator, you know that it's good up to that point. Then you keep going, or

something like that, you see. So there were times we had to go out at night.

Once I remember, I was working on a pole right above the central Kōloa telephone exchange. Some people were sitting on a bench in front of the store and one guy was telling another guy, "Boy, that guy up there, he's gonna get shot one of these nights." And here I'm up on the pole with that flashlight, eh? Spooky.

WN: So you started working [Mutual] Telephone Company in '37?

RC: Yeah, Kōloa. Dr. [Marvin] Brennecke was the doctor. My wife worked for the Kōloa Hospital.

WN: Is that how you met her?

RC: Yeah. She started, I think, Kōloa Hospital 1940. That's where I met her.

WN: And you got married in '41.

RC: Mm hmm [yes]. Or did she come '41? Forty-one, January, maybe. And only reason I met her was because she's Korean, and she mentioned to one of the nurses, I guess, if there's any Korean families here and stuff like that because, I guess her parents told her if there's Korean families, go and meet them, or something. So, I guess she mentioned that to one of the nurses and the nurses mentioned to this friend of mine. So one day he told me, "Oh, you know there's a Korean nurse just came in Kōloa Hospital. She wants to meet some Korean families. Why don't you go down and get to meet her, invite her to meet your parents."

So I figure, what the heck. So I went down, and, I don't know, we got to talking. You know, funny thing, the first time I met her, and here I think we talked for over two hours. So I thought, "Hey."

(Laughter)

RC: But anyway.

WN: Your parents must have been happy.

RC: Yeah. Ah, well, yeah, I guess so. But by that time, they didn't--I was already pretty old, eh? So they knew they didn't have much control over what I would do one way or the other. So my parents didn't say anything one way or the other to me.

WN: After you got married, where did you folks live?

RC: We got married in November of '41, November 6, I think. Oh, yeah, we were living with my parents. In fact, December 7, we were still in bed, I think, when we heard the news. We lived there temporarily, because we were looking for a place to rent. Later, we

got to rent a place. Belonged to the Blakes, down near the Kōloa mortuary, Kaua'i Mortuary. So we lived there for a while.

WN: Then where did you go?

RC: We lived there for couple of years, I think. Then I got promoted. So the company wanted me to live closer. I started working in the central office, in other words, so . . .

WN: In Līhu'e?

RC: Yeah, Līhu'e. The duties were where I was in charge of the people that are in the outside areas who install telephones and repair telephones and whatever, so they wanted me closer to Līhu'e, in case of trouble at night. So they made arrangements where I rented one of these plantation homes. Big plantation home. And they loaned me a car, company car, so I could drive up to the exchange. So I moved to Līhu'e.

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

WN: So in 1946 you moved to Honolulu?

RC: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: Why did you move?

RC: (Chuckles) Well, in 1946, I left Mutual Telephone and I went to work for the [federal] government as a--same kind job, telephone work, at Fort Shafter.

WN: Fort Shafter?

RC: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: How did you feel about leaving Kaua'i?

RC: I hated to leave Kaua'i. In fact, I always had intentions of going back, retiring in Kaua'i. But, not anymore now, I guess.

(Laughter)

RC: Because I don't have any relatives in Kaua'i anymore. Kaua'i is real nice place, but sometimes I read about names in Kaua'i, people's names and all that, and I don't recognize any of them. So whether they're new people that moved to Kaua'i or. . . . You hardly hear about the old-timers. I guess lot of the old-timers from Kaua'i, they must have moved to Honolulu, too.

WN: I notice a lot of people moved [from Kaua'i] in '46, I guess just after the war. But why is that, you think?

RC: You know, at one time, the opportunities on Kaua'i, as far as work,

was getting worse and worse. The canneries were closing, all the canneries. In fact, there's no pineapple cannery in Kaua'i now. When I was there, there was Lāwa'i cannery and then there was the Kapa'a cannery, so they always had, I guess, more work. So I think that was one of the reasons people moved out. No opportunity. I mean, things looked like there were more better opportunity in O'ahu than in Kaua'i. In fact, the population of Kaua'i was decreasing all the time. Gee, I thought when I was there, the high was somewhere around 31,000 or something, and then the thing was going backwards to, I think, almost down to about 28[,000], I think. Now I understand it's going back up again.

WN: I know '46 was also the year of the sugar strike.

RC: Oh, yeah.

WN: So that didn't have anything to do with your decision to move?

RC: Oh, no, no, no. I left---I came out here in September '46 when we moved out.

WN: Do you miss Kaua'i?

RC: Not too much. Not as much as I used to. I guess, kind of forgetting, I think. (Laughs)

WN: When was the last time you went to Kōloa?

RC: Chee, ah, wait. Must have been about '67, or somewhere in that area. I used to go back quite often before, but, I guess, as you're away, then the intervals get farther and farther apart, yeah?

WN: Since '67 I think Kōloa has changed quite a bit.

RC: Yeah. That's twenty years. Yeah, maybe I'll go back, visit, pretty soon. I'd like to go take a look again. Because I've heard so much about the changes. Especially Kōloa, every time I talk to somebody that just went to Kaua'i, they say oh, this happened, this happened, this changed. Tsk.

WN: Well, you know, when you look back at your life, is there anything you would have done differently?

RC: (Chuckles) You know, maybe I wouldn't have liked some things before, but, now, looking back and thinking about the whole thing, all in all, I think was all right. I have no complaints. The way I feel is, well, irregardless of what happened or happens, must be it's for the best anyway, came out. So with me, I feel fortunate. I think all in all, life been good to me, I think. (Chuckles)

WN: Well, thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW

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